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The Honorable David Packard
Deputy Secretary of Defense
Washington, D.C. 20501

Dear Dave:

You recently asked me to let you know the rationale behind the requirement for a "one-hour" data return from a near-real-time imagery satellite system. Attached is a memorandum which discusses the factors involved in some detail.

The new and unique contribution of a near-real-time system will be to provide intelligence for strategic indications and warning, and for crisis situations where timeliness is critical. You will note that the memorandum places the data return time in the perspective of the broader cycle of functions which ranges from imagery tasking and response, to intelligence analysis and integration of other sources, and to the time required for policy consideration and decision. It also points out the importance of keeping this cycle within a 24 hour time frame. Inherent in this broader cycle is the need for hard, accurate, all-source intelligence as rapidly as possible. Although I do not feel that the one-hour data return is an immutable requirement, I fully endorse the discussion in the attached memorandum which points out the value of getting as close to this objective as possible.

I am sending copies of the attached memorandum to Dr. David, Dr. McLucas, Dr. Foster, General Bennett, and Admiral Anderson for their information.

SIGNED

Richard Holms
Richard Holms
Director

Attachment: As Stated

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